



Howard County Commission on Disability Issues (CDI)
Howard Building, Columbia/Ellicott Rooms 1st Floor
3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 26, 2018
6:30 to 8:30 PM

Present: Heidi Burghardt
Cynthia Coburn
Nicole Czarnecki
Elliott Finkelstein
Martin Jones
Andrea Kolp
Leslie Kornreich
Bridget McCarthy
Diane Mikulis
Chelsea Stanton
Marian Vessels
Karen Wood

Absent (Excused): Raffat Ashai
Arthur Gold
Doug Lea

Staff: Michelle Henry
Erica Lewis
Terry Zeigler

Interpreters: Anessa Hughes
Michele Lawson

Guest: Charles Smith

I. New Business

1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

- The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm. Welcome and Introductions. If member is not able to attend a scheduled CDI meeting, and if circumstances permit, member should let Erica Lewis or Michelle Henry know by phone or e-mail before 5:00 pm on the day of the scheduled meeting or as soon as possible.

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve December 4, 2017 - minutes approved as written.

3. Executive Director of Washington Ear, Neely Oplinger, Nora Hart

- Neely Oplinger reported on services provided through Washington Ear within Howard County.
- Washington Ear is a non-profit organization that provides free news and informational services to those with disabilities in Maryland, Virginia and District of Columbia.
- Handout – Brochure of services and information provided by Metropolitan Washington Ear. Members who did not receive a handout and would like one, should contact Michelle Henry or Erica Lewis.

4. Police training on service animals – Karen Wood

- Karen expressed her concern regarding the lack of knowledge with store owners/businesses and law enforcement when dealing with those with disabilities who require service dogs. Karen shared a recent experience that she had in Maine. Karen wanted to know what the Commission can do to make sure that law enforcement in Howard County is aware that when a business owner refuses an individual with a service dog, this is a criminal offense? Commission would like to meet with 9-1-1 services — law enforcement (Sheriff and Police), fire and other first responders, building security personnel to discuss the rights of individuals with service animals and the types of training of personnel that are being offered or required.

5. Sponsorship of 2018 Transition Symposium, Erica Lewis

- Erica asked the Commission if they were interested in sponsoring the 2018 Transition Symposium. The Commission has supported this event for the last two years. Diane moved to support the 2018 Transition Symposium. Passed unanimously.

6. Council Resolution 23-2018 Ande Kolp Guest: Dr. Charles Smith

- Ande reported on above legislation filed by Calvin Ball and Jen Terrasa on January 25, 2018. Public hearing held on February 20, 2018 – Work Session scheduled for February 26, 2018

Discussion:

- Ande – Consistent scope of requirements much greater than what commission can do – need to seek clarity.
- Leslie – #3 page 3 – such a broad area to gather data – Possibility that entities may already have set data.
- Elliott – perhaps the study could be done by gathering “anecdotal” information
- Diane – the October 1st deadline is unrealistic – can deadline be extended
- Elliott – question identify “gaps” within Howard County
- Diane – the legislation is extremely similar to Commission’s Strategic Plan.
- Ande – had conversation with Calvin several months ago
- Elliott – suggested a series of workshops
- Elliott - discuss different issues open to public – not include education
- Leslie – education should be included – not much insight on Howard County Government
- Leslie – education needs to be equal to this study – however report would never capture all the educational aspects.
- Elliott – to focus on an area within education (inaudible)
- Diane – identify “best practices” in five categories is a lot
- Marian – noted presence of DCRS Planner, (Dr. Charles Smith) and asked his opinion regarding the study
- Charles reported that DCRS – Office on Aging did a similar statistical gathering covering a broader scope two years ago and costing thousands of dollars
- Charles suggested that the Commission may need to determine a realistic scope. Charles said that workshops may be used to gather some information.
- Dr. Jones agreed with Elliott’s suggestion to find out what exactly County Council would like; target specific areas to cover; research what other counties are doing and send recommendation back to Calvin and Jen. Data collection can have an unintended snowball effect. Perhaps the Commission should select only one or two of the categories per year.
- Ande reported that she doesn’t want this kind of expansive research – Commission needs to think where the “Gaps” are and to see what other counties are doing.
- Cindy reported that the Commission is not qualified for this extensive research and to identify “best practices”. Where to begin to do the research and what is the cutoff point?
- Charles reported that one county may adapt “best practices” however, is this capable and realistic within another county.
- Ande reported conversations need to happen about the certain level of expertise needed in gathering this information.

- Elliott suggested figuring out as a commission where the “gaps” are and present those – find “best practices” elsewhere.
- Erica suggested asking Jen and Calvin to attend the April meeting.
- Discussion tabled by Ande – she will talk to Calvin and Jen and redefine the scope.

II. Brief Reports

1. Strategic Plan Update, including data review – Elliott/Ande
 - Nothing to report at this time
2. Access Committee – Elliott
 - Elliott reported on the “unofficial” tour of Main Street Ellicott City.
 - Focused on the accessibility of the sidewalks and county plans after the severe flooding.
 - Elliott reported:
Northside of Main Street is narrower because of the utility poles – County plans to install “bump outs” for the utility poles and provide more midblock crossings.
Recommendations – concrete instead of individual pavers – portable ramps – possibly installing doorbell ring to access shop.
 - Access Committee has extended invitation to DPZ and DILP the next Access Committee meeting on March 13, 2018.
 - Michelle suggested Elliott send his “unofficial tour of Ellicott City” report to DPZ.
3. Provider Committee – Ande
 - Ande reported on Waiver Services – 2 new waivers were introduced therefore reducing the amount of those in need of services from 8,000 to 5,000. Presentations will be made at the March 14 Provider Committee meeting
 - Erica asked Ande to send her the summary.
4. Transit & Pedestrian Advisory Group – Marian
 - Reviewed transportation plan, additional accessible buses and pedestrian access.
5. Other
 - Leslie inquired about Commission members supporting legislation in the state General Assembly. Michelle reported that Commission members may submit comments as individuals and that she will find out what the County’s procedures are for them to submit comments as a Commission.

III. Old Business

1. Re-naming the Commission
 - Ande reported she sent the letter on 2/26/18.
2. Other –

IV. Announcements

- Diane – County Council work session March 26
- Cyndi – Plan Howard Academy spring session in April
- Chelsea – Named Ms. Wheelchair Maryland for 2018
- Michelle asked Commission if they would be ok with photos being taken during the April CDI meeting - – everyone agreed this would be fine.

V. Adjourn –

- Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.

To request this document in an alternate format or to request accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact Erica Lewis at 410-313-6402 (voice/relay) or by sending an email to ealewis@howardcountymd.gov at least five days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) prior to the meeting